# [fic] Human AU: Understanding

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**Title:** Human AU: Understanding.
**Fandom:** Supernatural.
**Rating:** PG.
**Warnings:** Angelcest mentions.
**Pairings/Characters:** Mentions of Gabriel/Raphael, Michael +/ Lucifer.
**Word Count:** 1,374 words.
**Summary:** Gabriel figures out what's wrong with Raphael and why.
**Note:** Written for **spn_30snapshots**, with the prompt understanding (i.e. an author's choice) being used for this one. Thirteen down, seventeen to go!

Also? Don't start reading here. Go here and start with #4, as that's the first story in this collection. You'll be confused otherwise.

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Gabriel is still figuring out the situation, even as he's crossing off reasons for why Raphael can't remember anything about being an angel off his list.

It wasn't the alcohol, Gabriel knows that, or else Lucifer would have thought Gabriel's reaction to be strange, but he had understood how much it hurt to see Raphael like that.

Gabriel thinks he can safely assume that Michael remembers, but he needs to confirm that once Lucifer pries their brother from the bathroom.

But the problem here isn't Michael or his hangover, it's Raphael and how he's making toast, humming a tune, occasionally asking Gabriel for more information, as he's sorry, he can't remember much and he hopes that's not a problem?

Gabriel wants to run again, as he can't even begin to explain to Raphael why he flinches from Rapahel's open concern, or from casual touches that mean nothing, mean that Raphael is comfortable in his skin and with touching and no.

Just no. Gabriel's not ready for this.

"Gabriel?" Raphael asks, and Gabriel thinks that maybe he should have told Raphael that he was Steve, or Tim, or Chuck, or *anyone* else, not Gabriel -

"What is it now?" Gabriel asks, and he wishes he didn't sound so angry, but he understands some of Raphael's (the real Raphael, not this innocent who makes him ache with the memories) anger now. This Raphael deserves none of it, but Gabriel hurts and seeing his brother act so *happy* makes him want to scream.

"Why are you scared of me?" Raphael asks, and Gabriel has to bite his tongue before he does scream, or yell.

"...I'm not scared of you, kiddo," Gabriel says, and recognizes now that he is trying for distance, hiding again in the Trickster for comfort. "You're not supposed to be here, see." He almost goes on, almost continues with 'you should hate me' and 'you should hurt as badly as I do, if not more' but no.

No, he can't have that.

"I'm not?" Raphael asks, blinking. "I hope you're aware that you're not saying so much, and I think I'm going to need to hear it all before I can help fix things here."

Gabriel runs a hand through his hair and exhales, wondering if he should get the last of the alcohol out from the night before, but he saw Lucifer wincing earlier, and no, being drunk would be a bad idea right now.

Raphael is still looking at him, expectant and just a bit stern and Gabriel wants to cry again, but he can't.

"Okay," Gabriel throws his hands up. "Okay, okay fine. I'll spill. Sit down and let me get some coffee for this."

Gabriel hates coffee, but the bitter taste and caffeine would be perfect, especially for this story.

He makes the pot, pours a cup, ignores how Raphael is watching him, and finally sits at the table.

"We're brothers," Gabriel says flatly, and when Raphael holds up an arm, gestures to his skin color, Gabriel shakes his head. "Doesn't matter." He doesn't want to explain vessels now, doesn't want to explain that Raphael is wearing someone else's skin, and that Gabriel is dressed in a man who swore at him while trapped in his own mind, a man who declared him a tricky devil for lying to him, for all the wenches and men and for not doing righteous acts and - Gabriel closes down that line of thought. He burned his vessel's owner out years ago, so he wouldn't deal with that.

"Okay?" Raphael asks, waiting for him to go on.

"Yeah. Brothers." Gabriel drinks the coffee, makes a face at its taste. "A long long long time ago we were a happy family, never argued, the whole deal. But things went bad, there was a huge fight that led to a rift in the family, and Lucifer abandoned the family name entirely while I just left out and out. So it's been a long time since we've seen each other, and you still blamed me for a lot of the trouble that went down after I left, and to sum up? You hate me. Or should, anyways. The only reason you were in my bed last night was due to all that booze we drank last night."

Raphael sits back, absorbing it all.

"Now you don't remember any of it, and - "

"Isn't it a good thing I don't hate you any more?" Raphael asks.

"...oh, god," Gabriel says, and buries his face in his hands. "Don't even start."

"Why?"

"It - " Gabriel waves a hand, abandoning caution. "Angels don't change! We never change, and a grudge is forever! If Lucifer started saving kittens and donating to charity, the Host would *still* hate him and want him dead! If I came back, I'd be let in but the only reason you wouldn't kill me is because Michael told you to hold your wrath in! Doesn't matter what the situation here is, it would still take a *miracle* before - "

Abruptly he breaks off, realizing what he's saying.

Raphael's staring at him.

Gabriel puts his coffee down shakily.

"Oh, damn," Gabriel says, and gets up. "Damn it! Lucifer!" He shouts Lucifer's name, not caring if it hurts him, but he needs Lucifer down here right now so he can tell him what he's done.

"What's going on?" Raphael asks, but Gabriel isn't paying attention to him now, not when Lucifer is back.

"Tell me again what you told God you wanted," Gabriel says, hoping he's wrong, knowing he's not.

Lucifer blinks, and recites what he remembers: "'For a chance to be warm, to be with family 'as it was in the beginning' and to have a home again.'"

"I hate you," Gabriel says, not meaning it, voice shaking. "I really, really hate you."

He sees comprehension dawning on Lucifer's face and then there is Raphael's hand on his elbow.

"What does it mean?" Raphael asks, and Gabriel shakes his head, hating his situation all over again.

"It's not enough that we're human," Gabriel says, feeling the fear spread. "We're gonna lose our memories too, and there's nothing we can do about it."

He's terrified, as wasn't being made human bad *enough*? But he can't stop it, whenever God gets around to it, and he'll wake up and be as innocent as he was back then, and he knows Raphael will ask him why that's a bad thing but he doesn't get it. If they start from the beginning again that means it will all happen again, not on the epic scale of angels and fallen angels and Heaven, but on this small human scale and that means he will face the fresh hurt of family fighting (arguments instead of swords this time? he wonders) all over again and he doesn't want that, he doesn't -

His thoughts come to an abrupt halt at the feel of arms around him, and he lifts his head, aware of his surroundings again, startled out of the blind panic he was in.

Raphael has wrapped arms around him and is rocking him gently, shushing him, trying to help him.

"...Raphael..." Gabriel says softly, seeing how Lucifer is gone from the room again, and abruptly turns and presses himself to his brother, giving into the comfort for now.

"You won't believe me," Gabriel mumbles into Raphael's shoulder. "But things are going to get worse and I can't..."

"Ssh," Raphael says, and Gabriel quiets, shivering.

Minutes pass, and then:

"...I don't want fighting," Gabriel tells him quietly, then pulls away. He runs a hand through his hair and gives into the instinct that he has been denying all morning: he runs from the situation, grabs his jacket and shoes and all the human things he needs and gets out of the house.

He knows he'll be back, he'll write the address of the house and a note to himself down on a piece of paper (just in case his memories go before he's back) once he's calmed down enough, but right now...right now he is scared, and if there is any instinct of his he trusts, even if he hates himself for trusting it, it is his instinct to run.

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